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R. J. Blumhagen, Governor
Department of
Commerce and Economic Opportunity



2005 Illinois Entrepreneurship Network Annual Report





The Illinois Entrepreneurship Network (IEN) provides entrepreneurs with coordinated access to small business consulting, entrepreneurship training, entrepreneurship development services and other tools they need to help make their ventures successful. Anchored by the new Entrepreneurship Centers, the IEN builds on the existing infrastructure of the Small Business Development Centers, Procurement Technical Assistance Centers, the Illinois Technology Enterprise Centers and the Manufacturing Extension Centers.

These programs are supported by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. Our other resource partners include the U.S. Small Business Administration, Department of Defense, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and other state and federal funding partners.

The information contained in this Annual Report depicts the services available and provided during calendar year 2005 through the IEN.

Through the Illinois Small Business Development Center and Illinois Entrepreneurship Network, a variety of free services are available to assist pre-ventures and growing Illinois companies. Services include:

- Business management assistance
- Technical training resources
- Market information
- Assistance with financial analysis
- Business education and workshops
- eBusiness services

Entrepreneurship Centers

Among the many specialized resources the Entrepreneurship Centers offers is a financial award program to assist entrepreneurs and small businesses with obtaining professional services for comprehensive business plan assistance, evaluation of a proposed startup or expansion, or other accelerated support purposes. Award funding is determined based on the potential for successful achievement of a significant business milestone for client firms. Maximum funding per award is up to \$5,000 of eligible project costs. Applicants are required to provide a cash match of 100% of the award amount.

- Provided 209 grants to high growth companies
- \$ 1.0 million in total awards

Small Business Development Centers

The SBDCs provide prospective and existing business owners with a variety of business services including assistance with business planning and management issues, marketing assistance and financial counseling. Specialized SBDC International Trade Centers provide existing business owners with access to professional advice and resources to help them enter the global marketplace.

SBDC International Trade Centers

(Export Assistance)

- Evaluation of a company's export readiness
- Easy access to foreign markets
- Pricing and transportation Information
- Foreign trade activities and trade shows
- International market resources and trade leads
- Specialized assistance through NAFTA Opportunity Centers
- \$ 125.7 million in Export Assistance

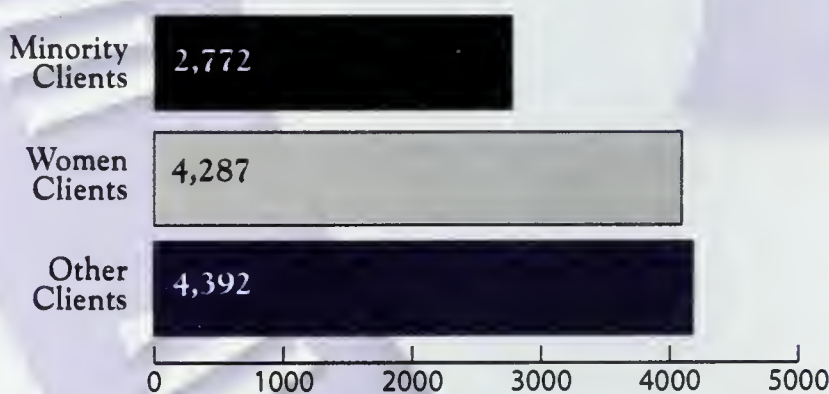
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Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (Government Contracting)

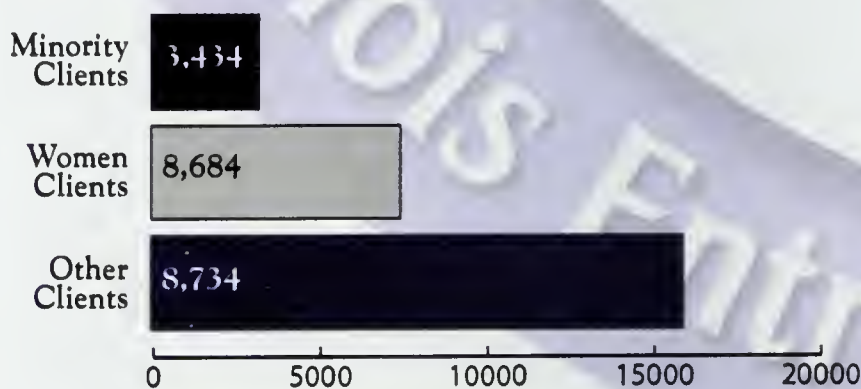
- Assistance with bid applications
- Targeted contracting opportunities
- Bar code and packaging information
- Government standards and specifications
- Quality assistance guidelines
- Contract administration information
- \$ 502.3 million in Government Contract Assistance
- 1,062 jobs created
- 2,658 jobs retained

2005 ILLINOIS ENTREPRENEURSHIP NETWORK CLIENTS SERVED

11,451 clients received one-on-one business counseling through the Illinois Entrepreneurship Network.



26,745 clients received business training through the Illinois Entrepreneurship Network.



Illinois Technology Enterprise Centers

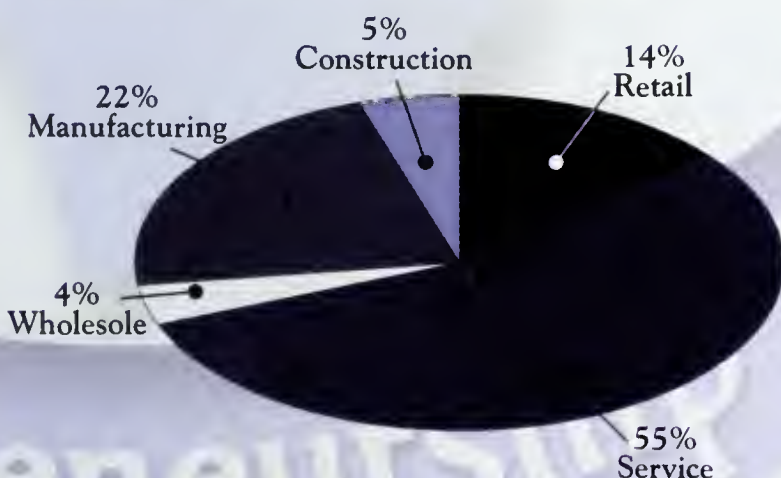
Illinois Technology Enterprise Centers serve technology-based entrepreneurs, innovators and small businesses by assisting them with critical business startup and marketing needs. The regional centers, supported by DCEO, help entrepreneurs locate pre-seed and early stage financing; help innovators in high growth and high technology sectors further their technical and/or managerial skills, and assist with new product development and marketing, thus nurturing new venture development in Illinois

- Engagements
- Assessments

2005 ECONOMIC IMPACT AND CAPITAL FORMATION OF THE ILLINOIS ENTREPRENEURSHIP NETWORK

- 3,458 Jobs created
- 7,244 Jobs retained
- 456 New business starts
- 148 Business expansions
- \$ 39.3 million in Non-Debt financing
- \$ 74.5 million in Debt financing

2005 ILLINOIS ENTREPRENEURSHIP NETWORK in Business Clients by Business Sector



- Referrals
- Enrollments
- Total Firms Served
- New Venture Startups
- Financing Secured
- Jobs Created and Retained
- Payroll from those jobs

Manufacturing Extension Centers

These Centers provide manufacturers with specialized services and resources to help enhance their competitiveness, improve their efficiency and grow their business.

- Assessments, where an on-site team provides an objective analysis, identifying a company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. .
- Benchmarking, an inexpensive way to compare performance to that of similar businesses.
- Projects are clearly defined up-front, based on needs and priorities

Illinois Entrepreneurship

Network Business Information Center

Located in DCEO's Illinois Entrepreneurship Network, the IEN Business Information Center is the single statewide resource for individuals and businesses to obtain comprehensive regulatory and permitting information. In addition, Business Information Center staff provided professional guidance to entrepreneurs by linking them to state and local resources.

In 2005, staff provided regulatory, licensing and other business information to 19,915 people and sent out 5,682 Business Start-Up Kits.

NxLevel Entrepreneurial Training Program

The NxLevel Entrepreneurial Training Program is a training curriculum used to help potential and present entrepreneurs learn skills needed to create, develop and strengthen business ventures.. Courses of study include NxLevel curriculum for:

- Business Startups
- Entrepreneurs
- Alternative Agricultural
- Micro-Enterprise
- International Trade
- Youth Entrepreneurial

Illinois trained 71 NxLevel participants in 2005 and have 68 certified instructors. The NxLevel Entrepreneur, Startup and Microenterprise curriculums are located in 23 Small Business Development Centers throughout the state and within the Illinois Institute for Entrepreneurship Education

Small Business

Environmental Assistance Program

Located in a non-regulatory agency, the SBEAP helps small businesses understand environmental requirements. Since its inception, the program has assisted over 111,000 clients with services that include:

- Confidential compliance assistance
- Toll-free help line
- Free quarterly newsletter *Clean Air Clips*
- Easy-to-read fact sheets and guides
- Directories of environmental resources and consultants
- Workshops
- Environmental Recordkeeping Calendars
- Permit applications on the DCEO Web site:

www.ilsmallbiz.biz

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Illinois Entrepreneurship Network



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